

## PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

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INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY  
(Chapter II of the Patent Cooperation Treaty)

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

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| Applicant's or agent's file reference<br>P/2268.WO/CJW                                    | FOR FURTHER ACTION                                       |  |
|   |  | See Form PCT/PEA/416                         |
| International application No.<br>PCT/GB2004/001710  | International filing date (day/month/year)<br>22.04.2004 | Priority date (day/month/year)<br>23.04.2003 |
| International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC<br>A47G25/28 |  |  |
| Applicant<br>BRAITRIM (UK) LIMITED et al.   |  |  |

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|---|--|
| <p>1. This report is the international preliminary examination report, established by this International Preliminary Examining Authority under Article 35 and transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.</p> <p>2. This REPORT consists of a total of 4 sheets, including this cover sheet.</p> <p>3. This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, comprising:</p> <p>a. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (sent to the applicant and to the International Bureau) a total of 4 sheets, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis of this report and/or sheets containing rectifications authorized by this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> sheets which supersede earlier sheets, but which this Authority considers contain an amendment that goes beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed, as indicated in item 4 of Box No. I and the Supplemental Box.</li> </ul> <p>b. <input type="checkbox"/> (sent to the International Bureau only) a total of (indicate type and number of electronic carrier(s)) , containing a sequence listing and/or tables related thereto, in computer readable form only, as indicated in the Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing (see Section 802 of the Administrative Instructions).</p> |  |
| <p>4. This report contains indications relating to the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. I Basis of the opinion</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. II Priority</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VI Certain documents cited</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application</li> </ul>   |  |

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|---|---|
| Date of submission of the demand<br>19.01.2005  | Date of completion of this report<br>18.02.2005                       |
| Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority:<br>European Patent Office<br>D-80298 Munich<br>Tel. +49 89 2399 - 0 Tx: 523656 epmu d<br>Fax: +49 89 2399 - 4465 | Authorized Officer<br>Reichhardt, O<br>Telephone No. +49 89 2399-2485 |



**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT  
ON PATENTABILITY**

International application No.  
PCT/GB2004/001710

**Box No. I Basis of the report**

1. With regard to the **language**, this report is based on the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.
  - This report is based on translations from the original language into the following language , which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of:
    - international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b))
    - publication of the international application (under Rule 12.4)
    - international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3)
2. With regard to the **elements\*** of the international application, this report is based on (*replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report*):

**Description, Pages**

1-12 as originally filed

**Claims, Numbers**

1-32 received on 19.01.2005 with letter of 17.01.2005

**Drawings, Sheets**

1/8-8/8 as originally filed

- a sequence listing and/or any related table(s) - see Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing

3.  The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:
  - the description, pages
  - the claims, Nos.
  - the drawings, sheets/figs
  - the sequence listing (*specify*):
  - any table(s) related to sequence listing (*specify*):
4.  This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments annexed to this report and listed below had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).
  - the description, pages
  - the claims, Nos.
  - the drawings, sheets/figs
  - the sequence listing (*specify*):
  - any table(s) related to sequence listing (*specify*):

\* If item 4 applies, some or all of these sheets may be marked "superseded."

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT  
ON PATENTABILITY**

International application No.  
PCT/GB2004/001710

**Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement**

**1. Statement**

|                               |             |                                  |
|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|
| Novelty (N)                   | Yes: Claims | 3,5,7,10-12,14,16-18,20,28       |
|                               | No: Claims  | 1,2,4,6,8,9,13,15,19,21-27,29-32 |
| Inventive step (IS)           | Yes: Claims |                                  |
|                               | No: Claims  | 3,5,7,10-12,14,16-18,20,28       |
| Industrial applicability (IA) | Yes: Claims | 1-32                             |
|                               | No: Claims  |                                  |

**2. Citations and explanations (Rule 70.7):**

**see separate sheet**

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY  
REPORT ON PATENTABILITY  
(SEPARATE SHEET)**

International application No.  
PCT/GB2004/001710

1. Document US-A-6 000 587 (see Figures 1 - 3A) and document US-A-2 984 394 each disclose a garment hanger having at least one arm connected to a suspension portion, the garment hanger comprising a first moulded portion, forming a first proportion of the at least one arm and the suspension portion, mated and joined to at least a second moulded portion, forming a remaining second proportion of the at least one arm and suspension portion, to form a hollow, enclosed monocoque structure without internal strengthening ribs in which a majority of stresses to which the garment hanger is subject are carried by an outer skin of the garment hanger.

Document US-A-6 000 587 (see Figures 1 - 3A) and document US-A-2 984 394 each disclose a method of manufacturing a garment hanger having at least one arm connected to a suspension portion, comprising the steps of:

- a. moulding a first portion of the garment hanger comprising a first proportion of the at least one arm and suspension portion;
- b. moulding at least a second portion of the garment hanger comprising a remaining second proportion of the at least one arm and suspension portion; and
- c. joining the first portion to the at least a second portion to form a hollow enclosed monocoque structure without internal strengthening ribs in which a majority of stresses to which the garment hanger is subject are carried by an outer skin of the garment hanger.

Consequently, the present application does not satisfy the criterion set forth in Article 33(2) PCT because the subject-matter of independent claims 1 and 23 is not novel with regard to the teaching of each of the documents US-A-6 000 587 or US-A-2 984 394.

2. Likewise, the additional features as defined in dependent claims 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 13, 15, 19, 21, 22, 24 - 27, 29 - 32 are disclosed in at least one of said documents US-A-6 000 587 or US-A-2 984 394 and as such do not add novel matter.
3. The additional features as defined in dependent claims 3, 5, 7, 10 - 12, 14, 16 - 18, 20, 28 come within the scope of the customary practice followed by persons skilled in the art and as such do not add inventive matter (Article 33(3) PCT).

## CLAIMS

1. A garment hanger (10) having at least one arm (12) connected to a suspension portion (11), the garment hanger comprising a first moulded portion (20), forming a first proportion of the at least one arm and the suspension portion, mated and joined to at least a second moulded portion (40), forming a remaining second proportion of the at least one arm and suspension portion, to form a hollow, enclosed monocoque structure without internal strengthening ribs in which a majority of stresses to which the garment hanger is subject are carried by an outer skin of the garment hanger.
2. A garment hanger as claimed in claim 0, wherein the first proportion (20) is substantially a half.
3. A garment hanger as claimed in claims 0 or 2, wherein, in use, the first portion (20) is an upper portion of the garment hanger and at least one of the portions of the at least a second portion (40) is a lower portion of the garment hanger.
4. A garment hanger as claimed in claims 0 or 2, wherein, in use, the first portion is a front or rear portion of the garment hanger and at least one of the portions of the at least a second portion is a rear or front portion of the garment hanger, respectively.
5. A garment hanger as claimed in any of the preceding claims, wherein the first portion (20) is welded to at least one of the portions of the at least a second portion (40).
6. A garment hanger as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5, wherein the first portion (20) is joined to at least one of the portions of the at least a second portion (40) by adhesive.
7. A garment hanger as claimed in any of claims 1 to 6, wherein the first portion (20) is joined to at least one of the portions of the at least a second portion (40) by cooperating clip means (80) on the first portion and on the at least one of the portions of the at least a second portion.
8. A garment hanger as claimed in any of the preceding claims, comprising bar means (50) substantially horizontal in use for supporting a garment thereby.

9. A garment hanger as claimed in claim 8, wherein the bar means (50) is an extruded bar.
10. A garment hanger as claimed in claims 8 or 9, wherein the bar means comprises a bar at least partially coated with a non-slip material having a higher coefficient of friction than material of the bar.
11. A garment hanger as claimed in claim 10, wherein the bar is coated on an upper, in use, surface.
12. A garment hanger as claimed in claims 10 or 11, wherein the bar is coated on at least one substantially vertical, in use, surface.
13. A garment hanger as claimed in any of claims 8 to 12, wherein the garment hanger has two opposed arms (12, 13) and the bar means (50) passes through apertures (42) in the opposed arms of the garment hanger such that opposed ends of the bar means are each located within the garment hanger.
14. A garment hanger as claimed in any of claims 8 to 13, wherein an upper face of the bar means is substantially convex and a lower face is substantially planar.
15. A garment hanger as claimed in any of the preceding claims, comprising two opposed arms (120, 130) and loop engaging means (930) for supporting a garment from a loop thereby.
16. A garment hanger as claimed in claim 15, wherein the loop engaging means comprise a respective loop engaging means (930) in a respective cavity (900) in each of the opposed arms (120, 130).
17. A garment hanger as claimed in claim 15, comprising bar means, wherein the loop engaging means comprise a respective loop engaging means in respective cavities in the bar means proximate respective opposed ends of the bar means.
18. A garment hanger as claimed in any of the preceding claims wherein the garment hanger is at least partially of translucent or transparent material.
19. A garment hanger as claimed in any of the preceding claims comprising alignment means (819, 829) for aligning the first portion with at least one of the portions of the at least a second portion for joining the first portion to the at least one of the portions of the at least a second portion.

20. A garment hanger as claimed in any of the preceding claims comprising engagement means (730) for engaging suspension means of a further garment hanger for suspending the further garment hanger from the engagement means.
21. A garment hanger as claimed in claim 20, wherein the engagement means are located in the suspension portion (110).
22. A garment hanger as claimed in claims 20 or 21, wherein the engagement means are hook means.
23. A method of manufacturing a garment hanger having at least one arm connected to a suspension portion, comprising the steps of:
  - a. moulding a first portion (20) of the garment hanger (10) comprising a first proportion of the at least one arm (12) and suspension portion (11);
  - b. moulding at least a second portion (40) of the garment hanger comprising a remaining second proportion of the at least one arm and suspension portion; and
  - c. joining the first portion (20) to the at least a second portion (40) to form a hollow enclosed monocoque structure without internal strengthening ribs in which a majority of stresses to which the garment hanger is subject are carried by an outer skin of the garment hanger.
24. A method as claimed in claim 23, wherein the first proportion is substantially one half.
25. A method as claimed in any of claims 23 to 24, wherein the step of joining the first portion (20) to at least a second portion (40) includes at least one of adhering, welding or connecting with cooperating clip means located on the first portion and on at least one portion of the at least a second portion.
26. A method as claimed in any of claims 23 to 25 wherein the garment hanger has two opposed arms (12, 13), comprising the further steps of:
  - a. providing apertures (42) proximate outer extremities of the arms;
  - b. providing bar means (50); and

- c. inserting the bar means through the apertures such that when the first portion is joined to the at least a second portion opposed ends of the bar means are located within the garment hanger.
- 27. A method as claimed in claim 26, wherein the step of providing bar means comprises extruding a bar.
- 28. A method as claimed in claim 27, wherein the step of extruding the bar includes co-extruding a non-slip coating on the bar.
- 29. A method as claimed in any of claims 23 to 28, wherein the step of moulding at least a second portion (400) comprises moulding loop engaging means (930) in the at least a second portion.
- 30. A method as claimed in any of claims 23 to 29, wherein the step of moulding at least a second portion (400) comprises moulding engagement means (730) in the at least a second portion for engaging suspension means of a further garment hanger for suspending the further garment hanger from the garment hanger.
- 31. A method as claimed in claim 30, wherein the step of moulding engagement means comprises moulding engagement means in the suspension portion (110).
- 32. A method as claimed in claims 30 or 31, wherein the step of moulding engagement means comprises moulding hook means.